Inception Report

Analytical Study on Alcohol and Violence Against Women in India

International Center for Research on Women
Submitted to

Department for International Development (DFID)

IPE Global (P) Ltd.

July 2014
Alcohol consumption plays an important role in the perpetration of violence against women, particularly violence among intimate partners. Alcohol is an important risk factor to address in intervening to reduce violence against women. However the relationship between alcohol and violence is not linear and is influenced by several other factors. For example at a neurobiological level, alcohol lowers inhibition, impairs social judgment and thereby increases the risk-taking ability of an individual. Whereas at a socio-cultural level, explanations suggest that men’s alcohol consumption in particular, is shaped by shared ‘cultural’ expectations about what behavior is expected from men after ‘drinking’.

Not many studies in India have explored the link between alcohol and violence against women. A recent analysis of National Family Health Survey -3 (NFHS 3) data has established an association between violence against women and alcohol consumption of husbands. Evidence to explore the linkage between alcohol consumption and violence against women in public and private spaces is much needed and in doing so, many structural factors at a policy level-like alcohol production, taxation, regulation and thus availability as well as socio-cultural and economic factors that determine various norms regarding drinking need to be considered. Some of these norms determine if alcohol drinking is acceptable on certain occasions, how much and why. Very often these norms around drinking normalize violence against women under one or the other pretext. For example excessive drinking on certain festivals is an accepted norm. However one does not know what implications this norm has for women’s sense of safety and actual experience of violence on these occasions. It is likely that violence on such occasions are neither reported nor recorded as women and girls are expected to take care of themselves on these occasions. Other factors operating at the individual, family and community levels such as women’s educational and economic levels, place where they live –urban/rural or tribal areas, and their attitudes to gender norms are important mediating factors that determine both the frequency and amount of drinking on one hand and tolerance towards violence against women and girls on the other.

As far as the situation of alcohol in India is concerned, evidence shows that an increase in numbers of alcohol drinkers in India for example, the average age of first alcohol consumption has fallen from 28 years to 19 years in Bangalore (Benegal, 2005). According to the NFHS-3 about 32% of Indians consume alcohol of which 4-13% are daily drinkers—which is still considered not a very harmful pattern, but Indians also demonstrate 'binge drinking' patterns, which means that though people may not drink frequently, but when they do they are likely to 'binge drink' i.e.—consume more than 5 drinks at a time (Benegal, 2005). Similarly, other studies (Heise, 2012) show that it is not just the frequency of drinking but also the quantity drunk on a given occasion that best predicts ill health and risky behavior. For example the systematic review on understanding the causes of domestic violence has pointed that binge drinking is associated with occurrence of violence. Similarly, density of outlets is positively associated with alcohol consumption and related harms, including alcohol-related medical problems, injuries, crime and violence and even after controlling for various other individual, couple and community level factors.

The social costs of alcohol consumption are well known, a few studies conducted show that Alcohol-related problems account for over a fifth of hospital admissions\(^2\) A study from the state of Karnataka in South India estimated that direct and indirect costs attributable to people with alcohol dependence alone was more than three times the profits from alcohol taxation and several times more than the annual health budget of that state \(^3\)

Factors like alcohol outlet density, accessibility of alcohol that are related to violence in general and against women in particular are factors that are dictated by the various policies on alcohol. Looking very broadly at the policy level, India does not have a national alcohol policy and thus every state makes its own policies around the production, sales, taxation and regulation of alcohol. For example the states of Gujarat, Manipur, Mizoram and Nagaland, as well as the union territory of Lakshadweep\(^4\) impose a total prohibition on sales, production of alcohol; whereas most other states follow a partial prohibitory measures and the age of minimum drinking in the country ranges from 18 to 25 years \(\text{[ref]}\).

The social costs of alcohol consumption directly affect a household and it can be hypothesized that since a woman is the primary caretaker of the household she bears a brunt of alcohol in more ways


\(^4\) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prohibition_in_India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prohibition_in_India)
than one way --- facing violence at home on one hand and in public spaces on the other. Reform in alcohol policies to regulate alcohol consumption by the way of increasing tax, imposing ban and other methods, seems like a logical next step on the other hand. However one does not know if the current measures to regulate access and availability have had any impact on consumptions and eventually on various types of violence that women and girls face both in the domestic and public spaces. There is certainly a need to generate evidence on whether and to what extent various attempts to moderate or regulate the access alcohol have succeeded in creating safe spaces for women and impacted violence against them. Such an analysis and evidence would inform development of these programs more systematically and help evaluate and monitor their impact on violence against women on a regular basis. Ideally it will be useful to know if the loss in revenues to various regulatory mechanisms is more than compensated by productivity increase due to the elimination of violence against women and healthy living. 

**Analyses of secondary data sources:** Economic analysis based on secondary data from varied sources to model effects of alcohol on violence against women.

**Study Sites:** The proposed study was originally designed to be carried out in the three states of Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. However in discussion with DFID, we realized that FHI 360 was carrying out a similar study in Madhya Pradesh. As a logical next step a meeting was set up with FHI 360 to understand their project in Madhya Pradesh. During the discussion we realized that the study objectives and methods followed by FHI were almost same as us in terms of conducted state-level analyses of secondary data for economic costing, stakeholder consultations and policy review in the state, and this would result in duplication of work. Instead ICRW and FHI 360 agreed to work together on this common agenda of alcohol and Violence against women and share a common conceptual framework to maximize this opportunity to generate evidence and initiate agenda setting of alcohol and violence against women.

After discussion within our team and also suggestions that were received during the inception meeting at DFID, we are proposing to conduct the study in the state of Tamil Nadu instead of Madhya Pradesh. We feel that by replacing Madhya Pradesh with Tamil Nadu, we will still maintain the diversity in the three states as:

1. Tamil Nadu would be an interesting state that on the one hand has the best social protection measures and on the other reports over 40% violence against women by their intimate partners (NFHS 3, 2005), whereas the overall development indicators for the state puts Tamil Nadu in a league of ‘progressive states’
2. On the alcohol policy side, Tamil Nadu has gone from being a state under total prohibition up to 1977 to partial prohibition, the most interesting facet is that unlike any Indian state, Tamil Nadu government has complete control of sales of IMFL trough Tamil Nadu Marketing Corporation Limited (TASMAC)

Thinking about all the three study sites, the variation they offer is interesting, for example while on one hand the state of Tamil Nadu controls the sales of alcohol, that is not the case in the other two
study states. Although the rates of violence is above 35% in all three states, the variation in other
gender indicators are better in Tamil Nadu, whereas poor in Bihar.

The current project will conduct the study in the states of Bihar, Orissa and Tamil Nadu as
three case studies and will fulfill the following objectives.:

**Study Objectives**

1. To understand how alcohol policy measures influence alcohol consumption. For example is the
alcohol drinking pattern different in different states by variations in age of minimum drinking,
extent of taxes levied on alcohol products, regulations on density of outlets etc.

   This objective will be realized at a national level, as well as in the three states where the study is
being conducted. At a national level a comprehensive picture will be presented to paint a
picture of the variations across the nation on some of the mentioned parameters,

   In the three study states, a more in-depth analysis on various alcohol policy measures and with
a special focus on how do these policies seek to protect women from violence.

2. As women pay the costs of the alcohol consumption of men, it would be essential to look into the
various laws and policies to protect women from violence and see how these acknowledge the role
of alcohol as an issue to address while dealing with violence against women.

   This objective will be operationalized only for the three study states in the present project.

3. To conduct analyses of data from secondary sources such as the NFHS, NSSO, Census and alcohol
sales figures etc. to test out the relationship between alcohol consumption and violence against
women after taking into account other factors that have known to contribute to violence against
women.

   We will conduct a cost analysis at the state-level in the three study states will be conducted to
understand the consequences of alcohol consumption on women in terms of violence against
women and how does this cost translate into loss for the state in terms of revenue lost due to
women’s ill health, poor status of women, increased crime against women.

Relationships between various policy measures to regulate the access and availability of alcohol
and consumption on one hand and violence against women on the other are conceptualized and
presented as conceptual framework in Fig 1. The framework will help guide the analysis.(Annex 1)

**Methodology**
The following methods are proposed for the current study:

*Desk review: Review of existing policies related to various facets of alcohol: production, taxation,
regulation.* Additionally review policies, programs that aim at preventing and addressing violence
against women. This review will provide insights into how the two sectors understand the linkages
between alcohol and violence against women, and document best practices from around the world
that have addressed these issues. For example, we will review innovations that have been tried in
African countries with men in bars/communities to stop violence when consuming alcohol. We will draw on ICRW’s international experience on addressing alcohol in African countries like Zambia.

**Key informant interviews:** The key informant interviews will help to clarify gaps in policy review and will aid in operationalizing the framework discussed in Fig 1. Some of the identified key informants are: example representatives of women’s group or groups especially working on violence prevention, Protection officers, outlet owners, policy and program persons, service or talking to the breweries association at the national level. Key informants will help us in explaining gaps in review, strengthen our conceptual framework and also help in further stakeholder mapping.

**Stakeholder consultations:** Stakeholder consultations from the sectors of alcohol and violence against women will be conducted to validate policy review, ensure buy-in and facilitate a cross-sectorial dialogue to deliberate on recommendations based on the data analysis and desk review. While some key informants may also be a part of stakeholder consultations, the distinction between the two is that while key informants will help us strengthening and operationalizing and filling gaps in information, stakeholders will be key influential people who might have a pivotal role to play in influencing/informing policies in the state. Stakeholder consultations, therefore will be a platform to get diverse individuals/organizations and key players from the sectors of women and development and alcohol policy to initiate a dialogue and deliberate on recommendation based on the findings of the study.

**Project plans and activities**

The following section describes the month wise operational plan to the study activities
*(see Annex I for the workplan)*

Project Activities and timeline:

**June – August 2014**

**Setting up project:**
The project has been set up in the ICRW financial systems and has been assigned a project code, which means that the project can now officially begin with its activities. A project team has been assigned within ICRW that ensures a wide range of inputs from diverse disciplines. The Project Director Dr. Ravi Verma and Dr. Katherine Fritz, will provide oversight and overall leadership to the project; the technical specialist on this project is Dr. Priti Prabhughate-who will be the point person for the project and will also monitor the overall progress of the study; supported by Aniruddha Bhaduri.

**Obtaining IRB approval:**
A key mandate for all ICRW projects is to get a clearance from its Institutional Review Board (IRB) which is an ethical committee designated to approve, monitor and review biomedical and behavioral research involving humans with the aim to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects. The project team has already submitted the IRB determination form to know the level this study will go through for ethical clearance. Depending on the outcome of the determination survey the team will submit the required documents including the research protocol, and draft tools for ethical review and approval.

**Sub-contracting PHFI:**
An approval for a consultancy agreement will be sought from IPE Global to hire PHFI to carry out the analyses of secondary data to model costs of alcohol consumption to women in terms of violence against women. PHFI is a leading organization in conducting economic analyses, they have successfully conducted similar analyses to estimate price elasticity of tobacco and its impact on tobacco consumption and have made recommendation to the government of India based on the analyses to adopt a rational taxation regime for tobacco products in view of public health. We believe that they are the most suitable organization to work with on the economic analyses component of this study.

Setting up technical advisory group (TAG)
We will invite local experts from the fields of violence against women and alcohol sectors to act as our advisors who will vet our study, provide technical inputs and guide the study team to advocacy efforts that could eventually create paths for ownerships

July- September 2014

Mapping, sourcing available alcohol policies in the three study states
Through the exercise of mapping we will focus on various alcohol regulatory measures in place to understand what the variations in these measures are across three states and within the three states across urban and rural areas. Determine through the mapping who are the primary stakeholders and opportunities to engage with them over the period of the study. A state level analysis will also help us to identify key stakeholders, KIIS and others.
At a national level, policy mapping will be conducted to provide a context and compare to other states in the country a broader level.

June-September

Desk review
Desk review will be conducted at three levels:
Peer-reviewed literature: this review will help us to understand the empirical evidence on violence against women and alcohol across the world in various studies. This review will help us strengthen our conceptual framework to understand what are the factors that mediate the relationship between alcohol and violence, also will provide pointers to various factors to consider in modeling alcohol consumption on violence against women and how other studies have conceptualized modeling/costing effects of alcohol on VAW.

The scope of review of peer publications will also specifically focus on literature that document/assess policy level analysis of alcohol access and violence, and how various alcohol policy innovations have addressed VAW.

Review of programs and grey literature: the primary aim to review this is to identify best practices around the world of programs, initiatives that have address alcohol consumption and violence against women. We hope that the review of programs and reports will help us in thinking and facilitating discussions with stakeholders to come up with recommendations or assess feasibility/adaptability of model practices to the India setting.

Review of policies and laws pertaining to alcohol and VAW: while the mapping exercise aforementioned will map and chart out the structures of the policy making bodies and accessibility and opportunity for advocacy efforts, a thorough reading of available policies and laws for alcohol and VAW will let us examine 'how' are issues around violence addressed/mentioned in alcohol policies and vice-versa. The in-depth reading a analysis of policies on alcohol and VAW will only be conducted for the three study states.
October 2014

Synthesis of desk review
Preliminary report synthesizing review findings of various alcohol policies, policies to address violence against women, gaps in policies and programs. The preliminary review will also identify key variables that could be potentially explored in the data analyses, as well as identify best practices that elucidate examples of programs that have successfully address alcohol and violence against women.

August-September 2014

Identifying data sources
Various sources of datasets will be explored to examine the suitability the data to conduct economic analyses of alcohol and violence against women. These data sources will comprise of publically available data sources like the NSSO, NFHS 3, as well as we will also explore the possibility to identify data sources from other institutions/universities that might have potential data to support the present study. These data sources will be sourced after following proper permissions. In addition to this FHI 360 will also be contacted to explore sharing data sharing, as a similar study in Madhya Pradesh is being undertaken by them and will add-on to the analytical value of the proposed study.

September- November 2014

Key informant interviews and stakeholder consultations
We plan to interview 12-15 key informants in all to clarify and build operational definitions for statistical model in 3 states. These informants will include members/leaders of women's organizations who deal with issues of violence against women, protection officers under PWDVA ACT, personnel of de-addiction centers who treat men suffering from alcohol dependence, experts from the field of alcohol from NIMHANS, UNODC as well as members from India Alcohol Policy Alliance (IAPA), breweries association of India and individuals from concerned departments that enforce alcohol policies in the states. These in-depth interviews will help the study team to get clarity on the factors associated with alcohol consumption and the associated violence, identify factors that mitigate the occurrence of violence, and check with the informants on how and whether policy measures to regulate alcohol influence violence against women.

November 2014 to February 2015

Data analysis
The data analysis will be primarily conducted by the PHFI in consultation with ICRW. Based on the results of the desk review, insights from the key informants, a statistical model will be built to answer some of the key research questions.

March to April 2015

Draft report
Draft report synthesizing the findings of the key informant interviews, desk review and data analysis will be made and recommendations on policy, programs that address the issues of alcohol consumption and violence against women will be proposed.

May to June 2014
Dissemination

After receiving and incorporating feedback on the draft report, the final study reported in each of the three states to relevant stakeholders.
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Figure 1. Broad Conceptual framework to understand alcohol policies and violence against women

**Alcohol policies, measures**
- Licensing (production)
- Regulatory mechanisms
- Excise policies, taxation
- Alcohol treatment measures by state

**Accessibility**

**Alcohol consumption**

**Social costs borne at household**
- Loss of wages
- Health care costs
- Increased mortality
- Increased household expenses
- Increased crimes in public spaces

**Fewer resources available for women and household**

**Norms around drinking and gender norms**
- Poor educational status of
- Poor economic status
- Lack of access to support mechanisms
- Collective power

**Violence against women**

**Policies and laws to protect women's rights**
- PWDVA 2005
- Various social protection schemes

**Revenue generation for state by alcohol sales**

**Costs to the state due to alcohol related violence against women**

**Multi sectoral policy recommendations to address social costs of alcohol to women**